

"The Power of Prayer," Psalm 6 – Thursday, June 1st, 2017

- After seeking the Lord in prayer, I sensed the Holy Spirit leading me to do a topical teaching before we get to the book of Ezra.
- As such, I would like to have you join with me in the book of Psalms chapter six, in a teaching I've titled, "The Power of Prayer."
- By way of introduction, I think it would be good to take a little time to provide you with the back-story leading up to this teaching.
- Over the last several months, the Lord has been ministering to me concerning the power of simply praying and even fasting.
- I've been walking with the Lord for over 35 years now and my own prayer life is becoming the most powerful weapon I possess.
- Years ago, I heard Pastor Chuck describe prayer as the deciding factor by way of an illustration of two opponents in a fist fight.
- In the 1980's Mike Macintosh and Raul Reis produced a video documentary about the Calvary Chapel movement in the 60's.
- I've watched this video several times over the years and one of the things that had really struck me was the centrality of prayer.
- When some of Pastor Chuck's mentors were asked what they would do differently, their answer was that they would pray more.
- In 1994, a friend gave me a VHS tape of Jim Cymbala speaking at a conference titled, "My House Shall be a House of Prayer."
- In it he shares very openly and candidly about the power of prayer related to his first-born daughter getting away from the Lord.
- I've watched this video, like Venture of Faith, several times, and as a result, they have both had a profound impact on my life.
- Enter Psalm 6, and with it what I believe is arguably one of the greatest Psalms related to the confidence of answered prayer.
- What I love about this Psalm is that it speaks to the simplicity of and the peace that comes from crying out to God in prayer.
- What follows are observations from David's Psalm of prayer, and perhaps more importantly the conclusion we can draw from it.
- Before we jump in, let's first take a look closer at the title we're given to this Psalm, as it will be germane to our understanding.

Psalm 6 (NKJV) — To the Chief Musician. With Stringed Instruments. On An Eight-Stringed Harp. A Psalm of David.

- While there is some debate about Who the Chief Musician is, I'm of the belief that it's the Lord Himself that David writes this to.
- It's interesting to note that David provides the specificity of the stringed instruments, including that of an "Eight-Stringed Harp."
- This could be that the number "eight" is the number of new beginnings, and David is crying out for mercy and a new beginning.

1 O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.

- David cry's out to God pleading with Him to not rebuke or chastise him because of David displeasing and sinning against God.
- To me, this speaks to how we should start our prayer, such that, we posture ourselves as sinners in need of the Savior's mercy.
- As one so aptly noted, "Mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve, and grace is God giving us what we don't deserve."

2 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled.

- It seems that David is so troubled, that it has affected his health physically to the degree in which he asks God to heal his body.
- This is one of those places in God's Word where we're not told what it was that had caused David to be so weary and troubled.
- The reason I mention this is that I believe the conspicuous absence of this is by God's design for us to sort of fill in the blanks.

3 My soul also is greatly troubled; But You, O LORD—how long?

- Here, David says that in addition to his physical illness from this painful trial, he's also emotionally troubled, greatly in his soul.
- Then, if this weren't bad enough, David, in this physical and emotional pain cry's out saying, "But You, O LORD – how long?"
- The reason I point that out is it seems that God deemed fit to leave David in this miserable state for an elongated period of time.

4 Return, O LORD, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!

- Once again, David pleads with the Lord for mercy in asking God to return, deliver him and save him from the trial that he is in.
- It's important to understand that David isn't asking God to do this for his sake; rather, he's asking it be for His mercies' sake.
- David is simply and humbly throwing himself at the feet of God's mercy knowing that this is the only way God will deliver him.

5 For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks?

- If you thought that it couldn't get any worse for David, think again, here, he's in such despair he starts thinking of his own death.
- I would suggest this is the ultimate low point for David, and it's not uncommon to think in this way when in the midst of a trial.
- I think of what Oswald Chambers once said, "God never faults a man for despair." Many in scripture like Paul despaired of life.

2 Corinthians 1:8–11 (NKJV) — 8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, 10 who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, 11 you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.

6 I am weary with my groaning; All night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears.

- Here, David says he's so weary that all he can do is groan and cry, so much so, that he soaks his bedding at night with tears.
- This is what's known as the anguish of the soul in that dark passage of the night, where we have no words, only our groaning's.
- The good news is that God hears those deep anguishing groans, which sometimes are more powerful than prayers with words.

Charles Spurgeon said it best this way, "Is it not sweet to believe that our tears are understood even when words fail! Let us learn to think of tears as liquid prayers."

7 My eye wastes away because of grief; It grows old because of all my enemies.

- We're actually given more detail here with David now making mention of all his enemies, which have caused him so much grief.
- It seems that the grief and sorrow from all David's enemies had caused him to weep so hard that his eyes had become feeble.
- Here again we have a physical malady that has come as a result of emotional pain in that it takes its toll on our physical health.

Again, Charles Spurgeon said it best, "As an old man's eye grows dim with years, so says David, my eye is grown red and feeble through weeping."

8 Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

- Here in verse eight, David turns a corner in the sense that instead of crying out to the Lord, he's speaking out to his enemies.
- I find it rather interesting that he confidently demands that they depart from him and then he even calls them workers of iniquity.
- What's even more interesting is that the reason he's so confident is because the Lord had heard the voice of David's weeping.

9 The LORD has heard my supplication; The LORD will receive my prayer.

- David continues in his confidence by telling his enemies that the Lord has heard his supplication and will receive his prayer.
- Notice how that this isn't in the past or present tense. By that I mean, God has only heard and will yet future receive his prayer.
- The reason I mention this is nothing has changed in David's perilous circumstances; everything has changed in David's heart.

10 Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; Let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly.

- The Psalm ends with David taking it further and by faith saying of his enemies that they will be ashamed and greatly troubled.
- Furthermore, they will not only be ashamed and greatly troubled but they will depart and turn back and they'll do so suddenly.
- This begs the question of what was it that changed in David between verses one through seven and verses eight through ten.
- I'm hoping you'll kindly indulge me for the remainder of our time together as I share the conclusion that answers this question.
- Namely, that of how David simply prayed until the confidence in God and the peace of God had replaced his fear and despair.
- In other words the peace of God knowing that God will hearken unto the voice of his cry took him to that place of perfect peace.

Philippians 4:6–8 (NKJV) — 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV) — 3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

John 14:27 (NKJV) — 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.